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# The Religious Sentiment, Its Social and Political Influence

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THE  
RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT,  
ITS SOCIAL AND POLITICAL INFLUENCE.

AN  
ADDRESS

BEFORE THE

Alumni Society of Franklin College, Tenn.

Delivered on the 4th of July, 1855,

BY DAVID LIPSCOMB, A. M., OF TENN.

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## ADDRESS.

**CREATIVE** energy delights in trine. It manifests this delight in every department of created existence. In the physical creation, we find matter developed under three different modes—solid, liquid, and gaseous; and yet these three modes of existence enter into the organism of every body. Matter, again, has a trine development of animate, organic and inorganic. Then, when all nature is a development of the absurd truism, that three are one, and when we remember that it is a law of nature, that "like begets its like," why should we homeopathize and stagger in our faith, and not receive, with true, open-hearted, allopathic gusto, the analytical, revealed truism, that God himself is a development of the triune—three being one. But these developments, in the individual man, are but the prototypes and prefigurations of society at large.

Society has the same triune development that we find in individual man. It is but the agglomeration and concretion of many individuals.

Every community has its selfish, its intellectual, and its moral or religious development. Each corresponding to, and the exact mean of, the sum of all the individual developments of the members of that society. The selfish feeling of a community is the exact equipoise of the selfishness of the individual members constituting that community, multiplied by the whole number of individuals. Just so with regard to the measurement of the intellectual activity and religious vitality of a nation. Then, every individual should feel that he is one of a number who are obliged to be weighed in the scales—that his individual character is not only to have its influence in the immediate personal contact which he may have in society, but also in the contact society shall have

with society, community with community, and nation with nation. In society, as individuals, we find developments into the composition of which enter all three of these elements, composing the sum total of the faculties, desires, and feelings of man. So intimately blended are they in their influences, that we can find no single act the result of one of these faculties, uninfluenced by the others. We denominate an act selfish, intellectual, or religious, just in proportion to the relative ascendancy of either of these elements in the composition of said act. The character of an individual, or a community, is formed by the relative influences which these elements exercise in the life and actions of a community. The selfish element of man's nature manifests itself in the division of property, the desire of gain, love of one's own; with small intellectual and moral development, is quite concentric and narrowed in its views and feelings, disregarding of the rights and feelings of others, and looks not beyond the animal wants.

The man or society in this state of development, is generally isolated and unsociable. We stigmatize the state as low, sordid, and base. Coupled with large intellectuality, it is more expanded in its views—sometimes makes a show of liberality, but from a selfish motive—sometimes looks to higher enjoyments than merely sensual ones. We may generally find this class among politicians, seekers after office, men ambitious of the honors and wealth of the world, regardless of the wants of their poorer brethren. They are frequently sociable, but selfishly so. The powers of the intellect are set to work to afford means of ministering to their desires and appetites. Men of this distinction are generally those who succeed in engrossing the honors and preferments of place, and in accumulating wealth. Communities in this state of development, generally manifest much power and energy in the pursuit of material good, and the accomplishment of gigantic works for the advancement and the power and splendor of a nation. Men of this distinction frequently take great pride in, and spend vast sums of money for, the adorning of a homestead, and surrounding themselves with the elegances and luxuries of life, and catering to their tastes and appetites. Generally religious, after a fashionable sort; but regardless of law, order, or religion, when either of them conflicts with private interest.



Self-love, or the faculty which relates peculiarly to man's self, is the cohesive principle of his nature; the centripetal force which retains his peculiar individuality and personality, which makes him the same man yesterday and to-day, preserves his identity as an individual. It is a motive power for sustaining self. This is earliest in its manifestation, and has more advantages for free development. It is first manifested in a desire to supply the demands of the animal system. These demands, and their gratification, tend much to its vigorous and early growth. The association with a corrupt world, a demoralized and fallen humanity, still more develops these animal propensities. The danger then arises that there may be an overgrown and precocious growth of self-love—that it may absorb all the energies of the mind and soul, and leave only a sickly and scant development of either. It often, like some towering tree, with wide-spread branches, and roots penetrating every ramification of human nature, saps every particle of moisture from the surrounding atmosphere, and attracts to itself the natural aliments of man's existence. The intellectual and religious powers thus being choked and stunted in their growth, in accordance with a great law of nature, are made to subserve the purposes of self-love. The weaker lends aid to the stronger. "From him that hath not shall be taken, and given to him that hath abundance."

The intellect is a capacity without motive power—an instrument to accomplish the desires and purposes of the motive powers; acts only at the prompting of one or the other of these. It seeks just such food as they desire. It is characterized by their serving the stronger more faithfully. It often goes forth in quest of new delights and new fields with which to regale them. It thus, in a measure, shapes their modes of existence, and directs their courses of action. It, through the organs of the body, collects and collates facts; this is termed observation. It performs, through the functions of the soul, the same process with reference to principles. This process is dignified with the higher appellation of reason.

The religious sentiment in man, to which we would invite your particular attention, early manifests itself in a disposition to reverence and worship, under some form, a superior being. It is

composed of the instincts, impulses, desires, and feelings of the soul, as the selfish is of the body. It is a sentiment common to every human being. The desire to pray is as universal as the desire to eat. Communities have been found ignorant, houseless, and naked; but no traveler hath yet seen that people, or even that man, entirely destitute of religious feeling. The soul does not learn to pray; it is an instinct as natural as the desire to eat. It arises from a sense of insufficiency within the soul. It is the intuitive development of the religious sentiment in man. As the soul of man was intended by God to be entirely independent of extraneous influence, its desires are dormant until both the physical and intellectual man are capable of ministering to its wants. It is the great motive power in man, when not acting with reference to self. It is the quality that connects him with his fellow-man and with his Creator. It is the centrifugal force of his nature, causing him to forget self in consideration of the good of the human family, and prevents the abnormal development of self-love—selfishness. It is the great gravitative principle of humanity, holding in just equilibrium the different repulsive and attractive elements in society. When it is not choked out or warped from its natural course by the premature overgrowth of self-love, it becomes the ruling element of his nature—gives character to his actions and life. It inspires to the performance of great deeds. It calls the full development of his powers into action, controls and directs the passions, refines and guides the affections. It interferes not with the growth of either of the other faculties, but controls and directs both. It musters into its service the highest powers of the intellect, and appropriates to the attainment of its ends the greatest energies of the physical man. It percolates every cell of the brain, touches every fibre of the heart, and nerves every sinew of the body. The religious, social, and political phases of society represent most nearly the developments of the individual man. Each the result of different combinations of the same elements of the triune man, but each partaking of the nature, and characterized by the predominating element in the combination. The social state has self-love for its base; is formed for the purpose of protecting self, and, by union of interest and aim, mutually gratifying desires which could not be gratified by complete individual isola-

tion. The social state is much modified by the influence of the religious sentiment, and is exalted and moralized just in that degree to which the religious sentiment is exalted. The intellect variegates and, in a measure, gives the coloring to the web. The religious development has for its base the religious feeling of a nation, modified and characterized by self-love. The political organism of society is the fruit of the social and religious feelings of the nation, and is the compromise ground of the two opposing elements. It is for the purpose of accomplishing the demands of the two, and is a sure index of their relative degrees of development. Two impulses, the one selfish, the other religious, mutually counteract each other, preventing the highest or abnormal development of either *self-love* or religious feeling. The abnormal development of self-love individualizes man, and disintegrates society—severs all ties of union between man and man. The abnormal development of the religious sentiment consolidates mankind in one mass, destroys man's integralism and individuality, and makes him lose his sense of personal right and responsibility in the social mass. The one destroys all social order, all political government, and raises the hand of man against his fellow-man. The other destroys man's individual feelings, and makes him merely a quantum of brute force, without motive or feeling, immunity or right in the social compact. The one genders anarchy, the other despotism. We thus find the religious feeling of a community giving shape to the political and social developments. When it is warped from its natural course by self-love, runs in harmony with the passions, it manifests great energy, and produces fanaticism. Hence, where we find the religious feelings of a nation excited, the mighty deep of that community appears to be moved. We find religious hatred the most embittered, religious prejudices the most unreasonable, religious bigotry the most obstinate, religious action the most energetic, religious oppression the most exacting, religious persecution the most vindictive, religious devotion the most humble, and, thank God, religious affection the most constant and self-sacrificing. We may see the influence of the religious feelings in controlling man in the wars that have desolated our globe, nine-tenths of which have been carried on in obedience to the demands of a religious faith. The selfish principles,

acting alone, would impel man to seek individual ease and gratification, rather than the privations of a soldier's life. The crusades were a long conflict of the religious elements. Every important work of a people is consecrated by prayer or some work of faith. We see the strength and power of the religious feeling in the influence of the sacred class—the embodiment of the national faith. We find, in all heathen and unenlightened nations, the priests the real rulers of the people; where themselves not invested with the sceptre of royalty, their influence is omnipotent in the setting up and deposing of princes. In the history of God's dealings with his peculiar people, under the patriarchal dispensation, the parent of the tribe was the leader of the social system, the civil governor, and the oracle of God to the religious sentiment of his people. Among the Jews, as a nation, the ruler was the executive of the priest. When the rulers of the nation refused to obey the injunctions of the priesthood, through the influence of religious faith, the shepherd lad was more powerful than the armies of Saul. The prophecy of the seer, through the faith of the nation, became a means of its own accomplishment. We find, in all conquered nations, that the religious feelings of the community, are the last to yield to the pressure, and the world is not without examples of a conquering nation having overrun the vanquished, despoiled them of all else, have in turn been conquered by the unyielding religious faith of the vanquished. The Jews, the wonder of nations, in all their dispersion and cruel persecution for two thousand years, through the strength of their religious sentiment, have preserved their pure nationality. This power of the religious sentiment is peculiar to no particular form of religious development.

In obedience to the requirements of his religious faith, Abraham binds Isaac to the altar of sacrifice. The faith of Christendom hushes the throbbing feelings of outraged parental affection, and this day applauds the act.

The religious feeling in India overrides the tender ties of parental affection, and commits the lives of their infants to the destructive waters of the Ganges. Destroys the strongest feelings of self-love, offers the living body of the wife a willing sacrifice upon the funeral pile of her dead husband, makes the worshippers



of Juggernaut bow the neck before the wheels of his death-dealing chariot. It has strewed the paths of the ocean with priceless pearls, the bones of the missionaries, who, moved by the impulses of religious affection, sacrificed home, its luxuries and comforts, its joys and fond endearments, braved the billows of the deep, and gave their lives a "living sacrifice," amid the fatal miasms and fetid effluvia of the noxious climes of the isles of the ocean, receiving continual persecution and death as their requital. Only religious affection can cause man to be thus self-sacrificing.

Not only does the religious sentiment control thus the social and political development of a nation, but each particular mode of religious faith has its own peculiar and invariable social and political counterpart. It is a condition of true worship, that the worshiper shall, so nearly as possible, liken himself to the object of his adoration.

But a selfish nature, left to its own resources, must form its ideal and worship a divinity clothed with the appetites, passions, and gratifications which are strongest in its own being. Thus, by a reflex influence through the devotional feelings, man's ruling appetites and passions will be still more strengthened and stimulated, and the man will be more and more influenced by selfish and sensual desires. Hence the attributes of the deity worshiped, will exercise a controlling influence upon a community. Paganism has always produced a certain and invariable state of society and form of government, varied according to the degree of intelligence and the attributes of the god worshiped, but with the same leading characteristics.

In Egypt, the oldest and most intelligent nation of antiquity, the nursery of art and literature, we find man worshiping a multiplicity of gods—deifying every thing that was useful in domestic life, that gratified the desires or passions, or that excited feelings of either fear or admiration. Reason, untutored by revelation, unable to leap the chasm from effect to cause, worshiped the gifts instead of the giver. With this uncertain and vague development of religious faith, we find an exceedingly low standard of moral and social good. Polygamy was practiced, incestuous intercourse was countenanced by the gods. The family nursery was unknown, paternal and filial affection were smothered. Woman was de-

graded as a slave, and regarded not as a companion or helpmeet for man, but a servile being to minister to his whims and passions. The children were turned loose upon the community to learn the art of living by theft and murder, and were tutored in the most accomplished systems of vice and corruption that had been invented by the genius of mankind.

The king was the visible representative of the Deity—his officers the priests of the gods. Hence, in his government, his desires and his passions were the only measure of oppression. His will the only standard of law—his decree the criterion of right. He was infallible. Resistance to the king's decree was sin against God. The subjects were to be oppressed at his pleasure. Hence we find here the monuments of the degradation and abject servitude of the people, in those mighty colossal pyramids intended to give immortality to the names of those princes who had them built, but which have served only to perpetuate the memory of that state of degradation and oppression in which the prince deemed the transmission of his name to posterity as an object more desirable than the welfare and happiness of millions of his fellow-beings. In which the prince deemed that millions of his subjects were but created as beasts of burden to minister to his caprices and desires. The more humiliating consideration is, that, through a distorted religious faith, these people admitted such to be the truth; they claimed no rights or immunities of their own. The state of Carthage, Rome, Assyria, Persia, and Greece,—in a word, of every nation devoid of the knowledge of the true and living God, presents the same essential features of social and moral degradation, varied, it is true, by a few faint rays of refracted traditional light, handed down from age to age, or the impure light reflected from neighboring nations. I know that we have been habituated to hear Greece and Rome referred to as models of political and social excellence. But was individual liberty secured to the citizens of Athens, Sparta, or Rome? Was there a social state among them worthy to be held up as models to us at this day! Was not Athens, in her palmyest days, but a consolidated monarchical despotism? Was not the degree of the excitement of the passions of her mobs the measure of her justice? Were the rights of the individual man protected against the inflamed pas-

sions of the multitude? Were not the best of her citizens frequently, in the hour of excitement, sacrificed to the mad frenzy of her mobs? Was not the only element of union and consequent stability in her government external pressure? Did not her government change with every freak of fortune or gust of misfortune? When the pressure from external foes was withdrawn, did not the elements of discord rend in sunder all government? There was no internal, cementing, consolidating tie, save self-interest, and when the common danger from an external foe was withdrawn, the selfish passions of the heart not having been subdued by proper religious culture, burst forth in an ebullition of unbridled lust and anarchical disorder. The history of Greece and Rome, when not engaged in wars with an external foe, is but the recital of corruptions, intrigues, and deeds of cruelty by factions struggling for power. No nation, devoid of a unity of religious faith, has ever held together, save from the external pressure of rival nations, or the iron bands forged by the despot's hands. No nation, devoid of a knowledge of the living, triune God, has ever been governed save by the despotism of a single man or class, or the more oppressive tyranny of the anarchical sway of unbridled passion and unlicensed ambition. The social state of Sparta was worse than that of Athens. That of Rome was not superior. In all of them, the family ties were severed. Chastity was almost unknown. Refinement of feeling was a weakness. All sympathy was hushed, and parental feeling was destroyed. The feelings of the individual man were destroyed in the interest of the mass. Only he was worthy to live who could serve the public in battle.

The social state and culture of all these nations were such as to smother out all the nobler impulses and pure sentiments of the heart, and make of man a brutal savage. Cruel, merciless, wanton brutality marked their associations and intercourse. Yet Greece and Rome are the brightest gems in the diadem of Paganism.

The spirit of Paganism is to worship whatever affords pleasure, or gratifies the desires of man. The fleshly passions have been nurtured by circumstances into strong and vigorous action. The intellect has been trained only to minister to its wants. The soul, weak, hungry, and distorted, puts forth its feeble cry for food.

From an intuitive sense of its own finite weakness, it grasps at the idea of infinity, and instinctively seeks that food which nature has allotted to its sustenance,—to be beguiled, by the fleshly, subsidized mind, with food which nourisheth not, which is accustomed to minister to the animal appetites. Hence the objects of worship with man in this state are such as afford gratification to the sensual desires and appetites, and his religious sentiment is clothed with a selfish feeling.

The effect of Paganism is to make men either slaves or enslavers. There is not that sense of justice—which alone can make man a freeman himself, or permit others to be free—implanted in the human heart by aught save a trusting knowledge of the great Creator. Paganism is the deification of passions, desires, and fears. The true worshiper becomes the slave of these passions or fears. Those in authority are the embodiment of them. Hence these passions prompt the rulers to oppress the subject, and the subject to be the willing slave of this oppression. The faith of heathendom has invariably produced moral impurity, mental darkness, and social degradation, most abject. It has made the soul the slave of sensual passion, and man a mere machine in the hands of his ruler. Man has been taught to cringe, with dastard heart, beneath the iron tread of despotism, and writhe, with docile, unresisting spirit, in the steel-clad clutches of religious tyranny.

For four thousand years, Paganism had produced the same bitter fruits; aye, and for two thousand years since, and still continues to bear the same. There has not been a community, or even an individual, shut out from the light of revelation, in which true virtue has been esteemed and sought after for its own value, or loved for its intrinsic beauty. Whenever virtue has been commended by the systems of Pagan philosophy, it has been on account of her affording a plausible appearance under which to accomplish selfish ends. There has not been a form of government which secured to the individual man, immunity from oppression by the many—that protected the weak against the strong. In the name of religion, brute force and animal passion has ruled.

Intellect, unenlightened by the pure blaze of revelation, has served only too faithfully the body, while the soul has been left to starve or feed on the unwholesome diet of Deified passion and

Apotheosised lust, which served to stimulate and cloy the soul, but never to satisfy its hungry longings, or promote a full and vigorous growth of its powers. Hence the Gods of Paganism are the personification of the different passions and appetites common to man. Their heaven is a place of sensual gratification and fleshly ease. The soul has been over-run by fleshly passions, and their religion has been fleshly lust and ambition, intensified and strengthened by religious sentiment.

But the trine man has been developed. The soul of man has been fed with food satisfying its hunger, and has attained a vigorous and manly growth, enabling it to duly balance and hold in check the selfish propensities of man, and command to the accomplishment of its desires a due proportion of the services of the intellect. Not only has man as an individual trinity, been developed, but society has been exalted and purified socially. Virtue has been seen and admired for her own fair proportions—been sought as an end, and prized for her own intrinsic worth. Family affection and the family nursery—the true passion flower of the heart—have been assigned their proper position in the social fabric. Parents have been taught to love and cherish their offspring, and nurture into active life the finer feelings and purer sentiments of the heart. Children, in turn, have learned to love and honor their parents. Man has found pleasure in lending a helping hand to his weak and erring brother. He has felt a chord of sympathy for universal humanity vibrate within his heart. Laws have been enacted which looked not to the benefit of the few, but to the good of the whole. They are founded upon principles of universal brotherhood and true fraternal equality—recognizing the inherent, inalienable right of every human being to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Have thrown around the poorest, most ignorant, meanest member of society, the mantle of protection, to shield him from insult and oppression, from either the cupidity or malignity of powerful individuals, or the inflamed passions of the many. Whence this great change—this mighty metamorphosis?—Has some mighty conqueror, enrolled on the habiliments of royalty and wearing the insignia of power, forced man by his example and precept to this change? Or has human nature the elements of progress and the seeds of renovation implanted within itself, that have

enabled it, by its own unaided efforts, to elevate man to that position which a portion of the human family now occupy?

Human nature has noble and almost God-like faculties. These faculties are utterly incapable of self-development. The soul can no more supply itself with food necessary for its growth and development, than the newly-born babe can, without the assistance of the nurse, supply its animal body with food requisite for its growth. It feels the instinctive desire for food, but is utterly helpless to obtain it. The mind, swayed by the selfish feelings, supplies it with food that poisons the fount, distorts and disfigures its growth, and transmutes it from an angel of light and hope, to a demon of darkness and oppression to the world.

No community or nation has ever improved in a state of civilization or morality, from any internal influences. They may deteriorate, have deteriorated, and always must deteriorate, when cut off from all external influences. So man, left solely to the promptings of his own nature—to the impulses of his internal self—can never exalt himself as a moral and social being. He must look for his exaltation *ab extra*. Whence, then, come the influence that has elevated and exalted society? For four thousand years the world had exhibited the rise and downfall of nation after nation—had added much to the experience of mankind in the arts of living and in the policy of government—had in some measure refined the grosser feelings of human nature. But, as yet, the selfish principle sways supremely. Till now the most extended empire the world has ever known, has reached the growth of its power and glory. 'Tis the bright mid-day of the Augustine age. The Roman arms had subdued the neighboring nations. The undaunted prowess of the Roman Eagle is known over the whole world. The splendor, power and pomp of the Roman Emperor, hitherto has been unequalled. Rome reigned mistress of the world. During the brightest hour of this age, a few Galilean shepherds, watching their flocks by night, attracted by the appearance of a star, are guided by it to the village—Bethlehem. Here they find a newly born babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. Him they anoint and worship as of superior dignity, though of lonely birth. This child grew to manhood, practising the manual labor of the carpenter, seeking not after honor or notoriety. Associa-



ting with the humbler classes of society, he was probably noted within his limited acquaintance, for sound understanding and great probity of life. Having arrived at years of maturity in the discharge of his religious duties, the ETERNAL GOD, the Everlasting Jehovah, acknowledges by many incontestible proofs, that "he is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Jehovah personified in the flesh! The incarnate Spirit of the living God!! Infinity is brought within the reach, and revealed to the comprehension of man. Here is food for the soul. It may no longer pine and wither from food that nourisheth not. It may find the true aliment to develop its powers to vigorous and manly growth, in the contemplation of the life, character and mission of this basely born babe of Bethlehem. He spends his time in doing good—in errands of mercy to afflicted and sin-cursed humanity—manifesting the strength of infinite love to rebellious man. He is buffeted and mal-treated, but renders blessing for cursing, and finally seals this mission of love by his death. He sheds his blood for the salvation of his enemies. Here is the strength and power of infinite love. Here is food that shall develop the true affectional nature of man. The blood of Christ is the only aliment of that faith which works through love. All other love is selfish. But this love which Jesus has manifested through his death is peculiarly unselfish—a love hitherto unknown to man. Its soft, pure light is brighter in the hour of darkness and gloom than in those of sunshine and gladness—it knows no self, and gives its blood's sweetest juices to night vigils—its ceaseless throes of sympathy for those who have not and may never know the sacrificer. The human heart may expand, and the human affections grow to the vigor of manhood. A new life bursts open to the vision of man. A life with new motives, demanding new developments, new powers, and a new vitality. A pure, elevated, spiritual life—a life of immortality, demanding the bright expansion and activity of the soul—and affording incentives sufficient to call into its service the noblest powers of the mind. The soul of man, fed upon this true spiritual manna, stands with out-stretched arms, seeking to enfold within its embrace the universal brotherhood of man.

Jesus, after his public recognition as the Son of God, commenced teaching, and gathered around him a few simple-hearted Galilean

fishermen, to whom he from time to time revealed his mission, imparted the principles and developed the actions of this new life which fed on faith in God, and worked through love.

The true centrifugal force of society is put in motion, which may hold in check the centripetal power, the isolating tendency of self-love. The great gravitating principle, which, while it destroys the molecular cohesive tendency of selfishness, forms a connecting link—a tie of sympathy permeating and uniting in one universal brotherhood the whole human family. Jesus the Christ, while he endeavored not to overturn or destroy, by violent or sudden revolutionary means, any existing law, institution or custom, gave birth to principles and put in operation a system of machinery, which, in their development and operation, must destroy every practice and institution contrary to the genius and spirit of his holy religion. Hence, while he commanded his supporters to be subject to the powers that be, to obey and pray for their rulers, he instilled into their hearts principles which, when freely imbibed by the whole community, and allowed to have their perfect work, must break in pieces the power of these rulers, and crumble into dust that towering throne which stands in oppressive grandeur upon the crushed rights of the toiling millions of Roman subjects.

Principles planted within the heart are the germs of action in life. Truths imbedded within the heart cannot fail to produce virtuous actions in the life of man. Error instilled into the mind must germinate vicious actions. Truth, then, becomes the germinator of all virtue and error of all vice. Jesus laid the foundations of his kingdom deep in the nature of man—making faith in God the first, highest normal act of the soul—the corner stone of the structure; and love to God and man—the true development of the affectional nature of man—the cementing tie. He gave no instructions in regard to existing governments and institutions, farther than general principles of obedience to those that are in authority. But among his teachings to his disciples are evolved the truths that among them “they should call no man master, for they are all brethren.” “That he that would be greatest among them should be servant of all.” “That there was neither bond nor free, but were all one in Christ Jesus, their living head.” That “God is no respecter of persons, but that whosoever doeth righteousness is righteous.”

His teachings furthermore evolved the true individual responsibility of man—teaching him there were certain duties which he owed to himself, his fellow man, and his God, from which no power could release him. The idea of individual responsibility necessarily carried with it its inseparable concomitant—individual right. Again, in all other systems of religion the common herd of humanity have been recked profane—unworthy to approach the consecrated altars of their God, or enter within his sacred fauces. Hence in all countries where Christianity has not shed its pure, genial rays of light and warmth, the sacred class or priesthood has stood between the mass of humanity and its God. And all religious teaching has been enfiltered through the carnal minds of selfish men—too often assuming to themselves the prerogatives of Deity. But Christ in his mission constituted himself the great high priest of the whole human family; and through faith in him every human heart may approach the inner sanctuary of the temple of God—himself a priest to offer his own oblations of prayer and praise, and to draw from the pure fount of holiness the waters of life. Thus by the teachings of Jesus man is taught to look upon his fellow man as brother and equal. That birth, place nor power should be esteemed, save as it was instrumental in serving and benefitting humanity. Christianity alone has been able to analyze and differentiate man, discovering to him the proper functions and faculties of the soul, and the relative and absolute offices and duties of each. In so doing it is discovered to him that he had rights of which no power could deprive him. It destroyed the unfounded assumptions of the priesthood, and the wicked pretensions of the sanctity of Royalty, and their united influence for oppressing him. It exalted man to a more intimate relationship with the Deity, and elevated him to the consciousness that he was an integral component part of society, and as such responsible for its acts and state. The Roman rulers were not long in discerning the tendency of these new principles; and in perceiving that they must not only be fraught with danger to the existence of their power, but were necessarily in a state of antagonism to the very principles upon which all despotisms are founded. The Roman government was tolerant and liberal in its treatment of the various divinities, and were quite willing to have Apotheosized the man Jesus as one of the tutelary

deities of Rome, could those principles—which he had clothed with his authority and which threatened the destruction of the Roman government—be destroyed. But he had sealed these principles with his blood, and the acknowledgment of his divinity invested these principles with the authority of God. Hence, though the followers of Jesus committed no acts of violence, but were law-abiding, inoffensive and peaceable; still the arm of power is raised to crush them in order to stay the influence of these principles. They are defamed, persecuted and trampled under foot.—When every desire of power and appliance of torture has failed to accomplish the end, they are butchered in cold blood. But the Christian religion, like the bruised flowers, exhaled the sweetest fragrance when crushed, sent forth the most thrilling notes of love when pierced and wounded, her saddest songs were her sweetest. She emitted the most brilliant scintillations in the darkest gloom of night, and exerted the greatest influence when most despised.—She lived by love, and spread until her influence was being felt effectually in political circles and the council of the nation. Despotism and despotic principles must melt away before the vivifying influence of fraternal equality. The thrones of oppression must crumble before the gentle under-current of Christian liberty. Oppression, persecution, all the powers of a cruel and vindictive hatred, have failed to stay its progress—nay, have rather lent wings to the seminals of true liberty. But now the two antagonistic principles stand face to face in open combat. It is but the struggle in society for supremacy of the two principles—body and soul—sensual, ambitious self-love, and the true spiritual, heaven-born love of humanity. The one principle, embodying the wealth, power and prejudice of the king and people, has arrayed in its behalf all the implements of persecution, the learning and power of the nobles, the malice and hatred of the people. While the other, despised and contemned by the rich and noble, has presented as a defence only the colors of a broken heart and the expiations of a contrite spirit. Yet in every conflict, the effort to suppress it has signally failed. The enemies of Christianity have failed to suppress it by force—can they effect ought by strategy? They find in its present pure, unadulterated state, implacable opposition to oppression. Can she be lured from the strong holds of virtue and

humility by the glittering offers of worldly respectability and fleshly comfort—by the enticing allurements of the glitter of wealth, and the pomp and splendor of power and place? Success and prosperity ever make the heart proud and the spirit self-confident.—The success of the first proclamation of Christianity was great, and when persecution ceased, its numbers and power gave it somewhat of respectability, gendering a spirit of pride and ambition. A season of prosperity and an unusual influx of numbers into a church, have ever been the harbingers of worldliness, and the death of true Christian vitality—sure weather-breeders of woe to the church and the world. Then she was in a peculiarly favorable state to be shorn of the locks of her strength, by the Delilah of worldly ambition.

Truth can make no compromises with error. She must always be prescriptive, and from her nature, aggressive. Whenever she compromises the smallest of her rights, she ceases to be truth.—Truth can travel but one road—error may travel many. When she makes the least truce with error, she but furnishes it her own garb that it may under cover of her goodly apparel insinuate itself into respectable society. She must consequently often present a severe and rigid appearance, and is frequently termed bigoted, uncharitable, selfish, illiberal, and called by other hard names.

The followers of the Lamb of God listened to the seductive voice of pride and ambition, and betrayed Heaven's holiest trust to man. They faltered and fell in the hour of temptation. The followers of the *Man of Sorrows* are clothed in purple and fare sumptuously every day. She who was the espoused bride of the Lamb of God—of him who had not where to lay his head—dwells in the palaces of the rich, reclines with lascivious ease on couches of downy softness, and forgetful of her marital vows, forms an adulterous alliance with the princes of this world. The church of the living God is secularized!! Truth is crushed to the earth. "She will rise again. The eternal years of God are hers." She will arise with healing in her wings and victory on her brow. The church has formed an alliance with the oppressors of mankind, but in so doing she has lost all of her distinctive features of purity, humanity and love. She has gained for herself respectability and worldly honor, wealth and official power—regal splendor and court-

ly living. She has in consideration of these worldly possessions, ceased to advocate the claims of oppressed humanity, but has formed a meretricious alliance with its oppressors, guaranteeing mutual and reciprocal aid.

Long years of ignorance and superstition swell up to the visions of mankind. Lowering clouds, pregnant with misery and woe to humanity, loom lustily in the distance. A long, *dark* and starless night of degradation and cruel oppression casts her mantle of gloom over the world. At the time of the introduction of Christianity into the world, as much ignorance prevailed, but few could read or write, as manuscript was scarce; but few able to possess it from the high price put upon it, and as there was no embodiment of the teachings of Jesus at first, the dispensing of the word of life was necessarily committed to the trust of certain men. They were divinely inspired, and especially commissioned to make a collection of his teachings and acts for future generations. So soon as this was done, these writings—the embodiment of the teachings of Jesus—became the book of authority, the standard of right, and the great fount whence flowed the waters of life. But the ignorance of the masses, and the scarcity of the copies of these teachings, held the people mainly dependent upon their teachers for the dispensation of the word of life. This, together with the large influx from the heathen sects, bringing with it many of the prejudices and feeling of awe inspired by the heathen priesthood, gave the teachers of the word an undue influence over the faith of the people. When a declension in religious faith and manners took place in the church, this influence was most deleteriously used to oppress the people. Enfiltered through the minds of selfish and ambitious priesthood, the word of God was doled out to the masses in homoeopathic doses, strongly diluted with human pride and human selfishness. For ten long centuries the faith of mankind was fettered. The soul drinking from this polluted fount, pined and wasted away. For ten long centuries mankind, oppressed by its beleaguering spiritual and temporal rulers, groped in mental darkness, and groveled in social impurity and moral degradation. The priesthood deprived man of the great chart of his rights and responsibilities; he became the willing dupe and degraded slave of superstitious bigotry and political oppression. He was again separated



from his God, and could approach him only through the medium of the sacred class. A hierarchy in the church was constituted, which controlled for selfish purposes the religious sentiment of mankind, by assuming to itself the power of directing the faith of the nation. The assumption of the priesthood to lord it over the faith of mankind, and its consequent surrender of the right of individual private judgment, has ever been the fatal Charybdis upon which has stranded the most sacred rights of humanity. Church polity and church government are but the external developments of internal faith. Where the faith of man is directed by his teacher, or defined and controlled by a class of men, caste in the church must be the result. But church government is the prototype of the civil government. Hence the political texture of a nation is the resultant and exact counterpart of its religious faith. Unlimited priestly power in church begets despotism—absolute monarchy in State. The degree of priestly influence in church is the measure of the power of caste in society, and the authority of the rulers in civil government. The slave of the altar is always the willing slave of the throne—the dupe of the priest the supple tool of a tyrant. On the other hand, whom the truth has made free, is free indeed. God's freed-man can never be the slave of either individual, social or political tyranny. Then, for ten long centuries, Europe—*priest-ridden* Europe—where Roman policy ruled and reigned without hindrance—where the highest religious perfection was complete subjection of, not the body to soul, but the soul to control of the priest—writhed under the tortures of political and religious tyranny. All nations still under the influence of the faith of Roman Catholicism, still bow the neck to the despot's tread. The means by which the church succeeded in fastening its tyranny upon the human race, was through the depreciation of individual and personal faith, and the magnifying of the priestly office. The withdrawal of the word of God from man, and the establishment of the priesthood as the medium of approach to the divine head of the church, were the first great steps in this work of enslaving man. Having deprived him of free recourse to the word of God, the spiritual rulers succeed in administering such food as suit their ambitious purposes. It was not long till they had not only made themselves mediators between man and God, but themselves assu-

and the prerogatives of Deity, claiming power to remit or retain sin. For the strengthening and extension of this power, various doctrines, rituals, ceremonies and decrees were invented through which to work upon the religious feelings of man. Of such were the doctrines of the infallibility of the Pope—canonizing of saints and saint worship—the power to work miracles—the confessional—excommunication and interdict—the establishment of the various holy orders—the sale of indulgencies and the right to persecute heretics—all tending to remove man from a sense of immediate and personal responsibility to his Maker, and render him dependent for all spiritual food and comfort upon the priests. Thus was man thrown completely at the mercy of his allied spiritual and temporal rulers. So long as the human race was imposed upon by these pretensions of wicked and worldly minded priests, so long was society debased and down-trodden, ignorant and depraved.

The gloom and silence of that long night of darkness was unrelieved, save by the occasional glare of a meteor-like light arising from the humble heart of some cloistered monk, who had straggled upon the word of God—his soul having fed thereon, uttered one loud cry of sympathetic joy, whose hollow echo but revealed the utter woe of surrounding darkness, and was hushed forever by the stroke of relentless tyranny. At length the iron has festered within the soul—the fangs of tyranny have sunk so deep into the quick of mankind, it can bear no more. The recuperative energies of the soul revolt. Social suppuration begins, and casts from the bosom of society much of the noxious virus that has poisoned its life-blood. A spirit of free inquiry begins. Through the instrumentality of the printing press the means of diffusing knowledge is increased. At this juncture the voice of a poor mendicant friar is heard, who has found the word of God and learned therefrom the great truth that “the just shall live by faith”—that faith in God is the only medium through which man can acceptably approach his Maker—his responsibility to him as an individual for his own private acts. He learns from this that the pretensions of Roman prelacy are false—that her ceremonies and rituals are but devices for increasing her power and enslaving mankind. “The just shall live by faith” becomes the watchword of that power which is to

break in pieces the authority of the Pope and Prince, destroy the devices for oppression, and manumit man from the debasing thrall of ignorance and slavery. "The just shall live by faith" implies the right and duty of private judgment—the right of man himself to approach the oracle of God, wherein he may freely draw the words of life—the right of every man to worship God according to the dictates of his own faith, without the intervention or hindrance of man. Under the influence of this principle the word of God was freely given to man, that he might learn therefrom and be wise. It became the palladium of his dearest privileges. It is the only true Magna Charta of his inalienable rights. Its teachings integralized and exalted man—purified and renovated society, wherever it obtained free course. The glory of the Lutheran reformation was that it gave to mankind the word of God. "The just shall live by faith" embraced the life and mission of Christ, with the ample and absolute authority of all the acts, precepts and principles evolved thereby. The same two antagonistic principles are again in violent strife within the bosom of society. The same results must follow. Wherever this simple truth gains footing, the social, political and religious manacles of society are broken, and liberal institutions spring into existence. Just in proportion as this principle is received, is society made free. Where priestcraft, working through the perverted religious sentiment of a nation, has closed the hearts of its people against the reception of this truth, and kept from them the word of God, ignorance, superstition, degradation and oppression still hold sway. Deprived of the true food of life, they have fallen into premature senility and decay. As examples of this, we need only cite you to the past and present conditions of Austria, Spain and Italy, and to the more instructive lessons of our South American republics, where republican institutions were transplanted from our own free soil; but the religious sentiment of the people not being prepared for them, under priestly domination, they have wilted, and wasted, and failed to produce the legitimate fruit. Religious despotism and political anarchy are the fruit of the ungenial alliance. Austria, Italy, and Spain presented during the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the highest degree of social and political development capable of being attained under the sway of Roman Catholic prelacy. It was the uncurbed

sway of priestly ambition, directing strong, active and obedient religious sentiment.

In England and Germany, the principle that "the just shall live by faith" gained ground, but failed to pierce the inner soul of society. It diffused only a sufficiency of light to render the darkness apparent. The people saw the abomination and corruption of Romanism, but failed to see the perfect law of true liberty.—The effect of this was, that they threw off the yoke of Romanism, but invested their new rulers with all the habiliments of despotism. Priestly sacerdotalism is still left to spread its leaven. But in the change of rulers, mankind has gained possession of the word of God. From this, and with the prestige of a broken mitre, the lay members became a power in church polity. The commons of England consent, and only become an independent estate of the realm. The interest of the masses are still further advanced, both in church and State, by the reformation and revolution of Cromwell. The establishment upon a firm basis of the *Magna Charta* of English liberties, guaranteeing to each Englishman the protection of society, was the fruit of this reform. Under the gradual influx of religious light from the word of God, the power of the priesthood has been gradually waning, and in proportion as the priest sinks to the humble yet exalted station of servant of the church, has the progress of the masses been upward. With the power of the priest go the privileges and prerogatives of the aristocracy. Till to-day the commons of England have advanced under the inlet of religious light and liberty, from the third to the first estate of the realm. Priestcraft still retains its forms, and nominal place, but the percolation of religious knowledge through the lower masses of society, has left the forms without power or vitality. Yet, in the nineteenth century there were a few, upon the retina of whose soul was imprinted the complete impression of the truth, "the just shall live by faith," whose eyes had been fully encouched in the rays of gospel liberty. Who felt that neither the rulers had the right to control their faith, nor had they the right to delegate this prerogative to them. These men, whose religious feelings had been thoroughly awakened by the teachings of the word of God, knew no rest short of active hostility to the unjust encroachments of the ruling powers, and earnest struggle to break

the illicit alliance of church and State. When the masses of society having been lulled to quiet by the sop given them by their rulers, and their consciences quieted by the lullaby of human pride, these few, unable to worship God according to the dictates of their own faith, looked around them for a place of refuge, where they might constitute a society based upon the principle that "the just shall live by faith." The virgin but trackless forest fields of America alone offered this asylum. 'Tis true there were difficulties untold to encounter—hardships and deprivations incredible to undergo. Their welcome was the fierce howl of the savage brute, and fiercer war whoop of the more brutal savage. Yet they were nerved by active religious feeling. Active religious feeling can lead man into the jaws of death, or to the very gates of hell. The fruit of this faith was a society in which perfect freedom of religious faith was recognized as the inherent right of every human being. The right to love God, love truth, and cherish virtue, was freely guaranteed. A solemn sense of obligation to God and man, as evolved and enforced by faith in Jesus Christ, is the only great cementing, conservative influence of society. All are equals before God—why should not all be equals in the sight of man? The political interpretation of the doctrine that "the just shall live by faith" is that *all men were created free and equal, with certain inalienable rights and responsibilities, that may not be delegated.* The declaration of American independence, then, with all of its logical sequences and accompaniments, is the ripened fruit of the reformation of the sixteenth century, or more emphatically of the Christian religion. It is only the belief in the divinity of Christ, and its logical necessities of fealty to the principles and doctrines contained in his revealed will, that can guarantee the individual and social immunities, and the free political institutions which cluster in so rich a profusion around us. What it cost to maintain this faith and its consequences, you all know. It was only through the intensity of their religious sentiment, guided by the hope-inspiring faith of Christianity, that our fore-fathers were enabled to look beyond the dark and angry clouds of strife that spanned the horizon of the long day of suffering and toil, and behold the calm and gentle dawn of freedom's bright-eyed aurora, his peaceful rays reflected from glittering gems of virtue enshrined in the hearts of a

nation of freemen. It was the determined and resolute spirit, the unbending moral integrity, which Christain faith alone can inspire, more than the prowess of their arms, that enabled our fore-fathers of the revolutionary struggle to bring to a successful issue that long and doubtful contest, which has secured and has transmitted to us those privileges, immunities and enfranchisements which you and I and every American citizen this day so richly enjoy. Although they suffered the most unheard of cruelty—their country laid waste—their homes reduced to ashes—families, contrary to the usages of civilized nations, by plunder and rapine reduced from circumstances of ease and comfort to squalid poverty—their wives and children subjected to the wild ferocity and wanton insults of beastly savages—themselves hunted down as wild beasts and gibbeted as public felons—yet was not the glory of their cause or the brightness of their banner sullied by a single act of vindictive retribution. Although itself baptized in blood, yet was not the lustre of freedom's fair escutcheon tarnished by a single splotch of cruelty's corroding stain. Although poor, distressed, almost famished and without money, yet was only a single star that glittered in the bright galaxy that gilded the horizon of freedom during its long night of suffering and toil dimmed by the foul blot of corruption. It was owing to this centripetal force of moral integrity—this devotion to right and justice—this annihilation of self in the consideration of the public weal—in a word, the complete ascendancy of religious sentiment, enlightened by the word of God, that we enjoy the blessings of American liberty. Then our social structure—our political fabric, are the out-growth of the Christian religion. "The just shall live by faith;" "Ye are all brethren;" "All men are created free and equal;" are the centre truths respectively of our religious, social and political developments—the necessary resultants of each other. The principles upon which our Constitution was based were brought to light by the mission of the Son of God. The mechanism which produced our free and liberal institutions was put in motion by the true development of the ETERNAL JEHOVAH. Our government, then, is the fruit—the first political fruit of Christianity. Our social system is an emanation of Christian affection. Not that either is pure and perfect in all its parts, but the principles upon which each is based are pure and per-



sect. Only these principles may make man truly free—only these principles can gender a true republican form of government, guaranteeing to each individual member of society all the rights, privileges and responsibilities pertaining to the whole.

The presumption upon which democratic governments are formed is, that the great mass of the community are capable of self-government. That the selfish feelings are held in sufficient abeyance to enable that community to enact laws protecting equally the poor and weak with the rich and strong—that man is capable of so far forgetting self in consideration of the public good, and of having so high a regard for the principles of universal justice as to enable him to do unto others as he would have them do to himself. If this assumption be false, the effort of the people for self-government must fail. But it is only the incarnation in man, through faith of the spirit of self-sacrifice as manifested in the mission of Jesus Christ, that can enable him so to forget self as to do that justice to his fellow man which constitutes the foundation of republicanism, or can enable him to say to the Satan, self, "get thee behind me," that I may look with clear, unobstructed vision to the public good. Know of a surety that the highest perfection of all liberty is the voluntary subjection of ourselves to the strictest and most wholesome laws. There is no despotism half so tyrannical as anarchy—no law half so oppressive as the absence of all law. In despotic forms of government, where the power is vested in the privileged classes—from the very principles of gravitation and self-interest—the ruling power is conservative and tends to hold in check the discordant elements of society. But in democratic governments, where this element is wanting, the selfish feelings of man tends to weaken the organic structure of society and produce a spirit of anarchy, the only conservative force that can stay the tide of excited passion and unrestrained radicalism must arise from the moral and religious sentiment of the whole community. Wide spread virtuous principles are the only true safeguard of society in a republican form of government. But there can be no truly abiding moral or virtuous influence, separate and apart from the morality which faith—unquestioning faith in the truth and glory of the divinity of Christ, inspire. Christianity is the only solid basis of morality—any attempt to bolster it up without an active sense of

responsibility to God, is but building upon the sand, that it may be swept away by the first angry wave of excited passion.

Inasmuch as the tendency of the selfish feelings of the ruling power in free governments is to anarchy, that form of religious development fraught with more danger to free government than any other, is that in which the faith of the community having been freed from the dominion of priestcraft in some of its forms, without having a sterling sense of responsibility to God implanted in the heart, deluded by the *ignis fatuus* of irresponsibility, seeks to free itself from all control—all subjection. Prompted by human pride, it seeks within itself a guide for its acts, it certainly in so doing surrenders itself as a slave to selfish passions. But with the two motive powers—love of self and love of superior *being*—when the medium and means of sustaining the latter by a want of faith is cut off, the former must rule, and all the affections of the soul must be guided by it. The intellect must be supremely under its influence. But human reason is variable—human passion and human desire is fickle and false—is human. Hence there can be nothing stable—no unity of purpose—no unbending determination upon the part of an individual or community to accomplish anything great or worthy, while man is guided by reason for the accomplishment of purposes prompted by human instinct and human desire. *Man*, loosed from the moorings of hope inspired by faith in God, and deprived of the consequent incentives to earnest activity—in quiet times “promiscuously perambulates” life without guide, object or end—accomplishing nothing farther than the continual cloying of his ever varying appetites and desires. But in stormy times, when the elements of discord and strife are excited, unstayed by true integrity of purpose, unguided by the wholesome restraint of a well developed sense of responsibility, he is driven to and fro by every fierce wind and stormy passion. Nations on a larger scale act exactly like individuals. As an example of this, we may refer to the French revolution—the reign of terror—the night of blood—the legitimate child of the ribald infidelity of the witty and scoffing Voltaire—the erudite Gibbon—the dogmatic Hobbes—the vigorous but sordid and scurrilous Paine. The French people, long the slaves of their allied spiritual and civil rulers, saw that they had long been the dupes of falsehood and the vic-

↑ tims of merciless oppression. Their long faith was broken—imagination, wild with the delight of irresponsible power, hurried them beyond all reason or justice. In the hour of unrestrained indignation, they boldly threw off all restraint, all sense of responsibility, and gave unlicensed sway to the wicked feelings of the heart. They sought not liberty, but power. They swayed until humanity, sated with suffering and cruelty, turns in loathing and disgust, and seeks refuge from the anarchical, blood-thirsty demon under the wings of despotism. France, from the elements of strife within her bosom, has in her religious feeling alternated twixt blind devotion to priestly power, and open infidelity. Political France has vacillated between the oppressive rule of a sceptred tyrant and the depleting, devastating sway of heedless anarchy. The difference in the results of the American and the French revolution amply illustrates the different effects and tendencies of true freedom, guided by a sense of responsibility to God, from those of the wild, reckless, libidinous libertinism of infidelity.

Earnest faith is despoiled of its strength and power most easily, not by the bold attacks of open and bare-faced infidelity, but by first lulling to feelings of safety the consciousness of man, then under false and insidious guise, dressed in apparel of truth, instilling false and dangerous errors. Christ himself was betrayed by a professed follower and friend. Since that day the truth and the church have had much more to fear from their professed friends than their enemies. It has been the weakness of professed christians to become too self-sufficient. After having learned much from Christianity, and enjoyed many of its blessings, elated by pride of heart, they claim the sufficiency of human reason for the discovery of those truths, and attribute to their own nature those blessings which the Christian religion alone could confer. Such pretensions are indeed a flattering unction to human pride, but devoid of all truth. The light that enlightens man's soul must be a ray *divine* from the eternal fount of all light. There is nothing absolute in human nature save frailty—nothing existing therewith that partakes not of the contingencies of human life.

There is nought of which we can form a conception truly and purely absolute, save the eternal Spirit and author of nature as he has revealed himself to man. His will, then, by virtue of its au-

thor, becomes to us an absolute and invariable standard of right. Human nature, then, can have within itself no standard of absolute right. It has nought save the equipoise of all its contending passions and desires, upon which the soul may rest from the strife of contending and discordant elements—nought save the mean or axis of its revolving prejudices and eddying hopes to which it can refer all acts and motives as a criterion of right. Human reason and human nature is variable, and needs a constant, unchanging standard by which it may shape itself, and to which it may refer all acts and principles as a criterion of absolute truth. For just as man is influenced by impulse, self-interest or a higher sense of duty, must this sense of right vary. The highest merit that can be claimed for man is, that he has within him an impulse prompting him to perform what his judgment decries to be right. The ever-cloying appetite, ever-varying impulses, eddying passions and blinding prejudices—the result in a great measure of external and fortuitous circumstances—permit the equipoise of judgment to rest at no one point for two consecutive moments. The axis of his various propensities and desires varies with every ebullition of passion—every change of an ever-changing body, and every varying circumstance of a constantly mutating external existence. Then this could only be a correct criterion, when a well-developed soul holds in check the animal propensities. Unaided by the faith and light of revelation, itself is subject necessarily to other and contrary influences.

Within our own country has arisen a class of teachers under the garb of Christianity, deifying nature or reason. Having decked this resuscitated heathen goddess in plumes plucked from the crown of Christianity, with ingrate hearts they have denied the source whence they derived them, and degraded the great Author of Christianity to a mere man. These teachers claim his revelations as but the intuitions of reason. Perfected reason they exclaim, and Jesus the perfect man. But despoil him of his claims to Divinity, however perfect you make him, you divest him of his robes of office, his power is gone, and the authority of his teachings vanish as thin air—man's sense of responsibility must vanish with it. For man's frail reason *will* prevail and worship its own ideal—finite and imperfect as the motive which prompts it, unless called

by a sense of higher authority to worship that which is above and independent of all reason. But in troublous times which "try men's souls," this ill-gotten plumage will be cast off, this borrowed light will fade, and by its fruits shall ye judge it. That system of religion which teaches that man can approach and worship God acceptably otherwise than through the principles and ordinances contained in the Christian Scriptures, necessarily by its teachings destroys the authority of this only standard of pure and absolute truth within the reach of man—destroys this, destroys the seeds of virtue and pure morality—destroys all sense of responsibility—destroys the strongest stays of conservatism and gives free license to the sway of uncurbed appetite and unhallowed ambition. It is necessarily disorganizing in its tendency—deprives all law, whether social, religious or civil, of its ægis of authority—disintegrates the whole social fabric, and undermines all civil government. Its infectious virus permeates the precincts of the family hearthstone—spreads its blighting and baleful influences there—destroys the unity and fitness of the family circle—destroys the sanctity of conjugal affection, and breaks the rod of parental authority. It seduces woman from the sacred privacy of the family hearthstone—dis-mantles her cheek of its purest rouge, the blush of modesty, and exposes her to the contaminating, corrupting publicity of the unchastened strife of partizan fervor and political corruption. The teachers of these doctrines ignore the fact, that circumstances incidental to life everywhere promote a premature growth of the animal propensities of man's nature, while the moral and affectional, like tender plants, require the care and culture, the guidance of tenderness and affection. We are free to admit that every appetite of the body, impulse of the heart, and passion of the soul, was given man to promote his welfare and God's honor—and under proper restraints, there is not a propensity of his nature that would not contribute to this end. In consequence of the fall of man—like the sin-cursed soul—so in his nature there be noxious weeds that grow of themselves and choke out the tender plants of justice, purity, truth and love, and need the free and constant exercise of the rod of authority to keep them in constant abeyance. The word of God in religion, the civil law in politics, and parental authority in the social system, can alone effect this. Otherwise, passion

and animal impulse, which always predominate in youth, will have free sway in forming the habits and characters of youths, thereby planting and watering the seminals of future sin and misery. To prepare man for a life of usefulness and happiness, the selfish feelings of childhood must be repressed, the proud heart must be humbled, and the stubborn spirit flexed. The rod of parental authority, tempered with parental love, alone can do this. To prepare man for the enjoyment of a higher life, the hardened heart must be melted, the proud spirit brought low—only the ‘fire and hammer’ of God’s wrath, mingled with the heaven-distilled dews of His love, can properly effect this.

Then that system of philosophy or religion which makes man’s feelings, or any of the instincts or impulses of his nature, a criterion of right, destroys all authority, all sense of responsibility, tends only to corrupt and demoralize a community, and lends wings to the ultra spirit of fanaticism. We may see the ripening fruit of this deceptive doctrine in the fatal delusion of spirit rappings, the awfully debauched social and religious development of Mormonism, and politically in the lawless fanaticism, both North and South, which sets at defiance the laws of our lands, and threatens, with sacrilegious hand, to rive in sunder this Union, cemented by the blood of our patriotic fore-fathers. Such are some of the fruits of that system of religion which transmutes every whim of fancy, every impulse of feeling, whether good or bad, every ebullition of passion, and every dictate of prejudice, into an inspiration of right and truth. We feel free to dogmatize the fact, that separate and apart from the gentle, yet powerful restraint imposed by the Christian Scriptures, there is not an element in society which can restrain the fell spirit of fanatical and lawless violence which everywhere raises its hydra head, in defiance of all law, moral, social or political. Then our country was settled in obedience to the principle “that the just shall live by faith.” Our social system—our free political government and liberal institutions, are the fruit of this principle. Whatever of blessings they have conferred—whatever of virtue and purity they still retain, is attributable to the influence of this truth. Then would we still cherish the precious boon—would we prove ourselves worthy a heritage so noble from a paternity so exalted—would we preserve



and transmit to posterity the blessings of a Union christened in the baptism of the blood of its own free and noble born children, it must be through the power and vitality of Christian faith. The Christian religion, not partizan zeal nor sectarian dogmata, but the religion of the Bible—the true religion of the heart, is the great substratum of society, upon which the corner stone of freedom's edifice must ever rest. Then if the religious sentiment of man is thus powerful in controlling him for weal or woe—if as we see everything in society worthy to be preserved is the result of an enlightened religious sentiment—of a fully developed soul in man—are there not strong appeals to every lover of honor, justice and truth, to every patriot lover of freedom, to earnestly seek the proper, full, trine development of man? If the word of God, alone, in its revelations, promises and precepts, can thus truly develop him, opening to him the stores of good upon which the soul may feast and run riot in the pleasures of a higher life, should it not be the earnest desire of every lover of humanity to uphold the teachings and glories of this book to the whole human family?—The Bible is the only true guide of reform—reforming and destroying the false and evil, conserving the true and good. It alone can unite revolution with prescription—progress with stability—the energy and incentive of youth with the staidness of mature age. Its simple teaching banishes all privileged order from religion—all caste from the church—destroys the official power of minister or priest. It begets pure individual faith, free from the corsets and bandages of human ritualism and human creeds, gendering independent congregational church polity. Such a religious faith alone genders that which is pure and perfect in either politics or religion.

Then let us learn that every effort to improve or revolutionize a community, to be effectual, must be done through the medium of the religious sentiment. All changes in society not based upon a thorough religious conviction of the people must prove abortive. All efforts and associations for the amelioration of the many ills and ailments, social, religious, or political, of humanity, divorced from the pure promptings of Christian faith, and the principles developed in the Christian Scriptures, are futile and must fail. Christian faith is the only true alchemy of life that transmutes all it

touches into pure gold, and clothes every effort of man for the elevation of his fellow man with the halo of pure philanthropy. It alone can inspire and exalt true patriotism. Every effort to free the down trodden of earth from the galling yoke of bondage, to be effectual, must be done by first freeing their souls from the domination of both priestly tyranny and selfish passion. Let us learn that every effort to check, control or force the religious sentiment of a people, by alliances with the secular power or political associations, must fail and react with redoubled violence upon those making the effort. Whenever the church stoops to call to her aid secular power, political associations, or the influence of corrupt and wicked men, she betrays her most sacred trust, forms an adulterous alliance with the baser passions of humanity, subjects the religious sentiment to the fleshly and selfish carnality of man's nature. Yet we would not disconnect religion and politics. God hath joined them. We would have each assigned its proper position. Civil government is the child of religious faith, and should never attempt to control it—but would it live long and prosper, must be obedient to the faith of the people. On the other hand, it is the duty of religion, working through individual faith, to guide, guard and foster the civil institutions to a free and vigorous growth. We would have every human being perform his civil duties with a deep sense of religious responsibility. We would have every patriot lover of liberty accept, and jealously preserve inviolable, the franchises of freedom as the gifts of God. We would especially have every American freeman approach the ballot box of his country as the sacramental altar of his God—with bared feet and uncovered head, conscious that he treads upon holy ground. Let us learn that when we would free a nation from the yoke of despotism, instead of resolves of sympathy, instead of armies equipped with implements of death, we should send the humble missionary with the word of God—the *Magna Charta* of man's inalienable rights and solemn responsibilities. The humble self-sacrificing missionary, moving on missions of love among the lower ranks of society, is more potent in influencing the counsel and policy of nations, than the liveried and courtly envoy from the most powerful nation on earth. The blood-stained star of Bethlehem has ever

↑ been the fore-runner; aye, the bright morning star of freedom's peaceful reign.

Methinks had one half the time and means that have been expended in the equipage of courtly envoys and ministerial functionaries, been expended in sending the word of God to benighted humanity, instead of to-day beholding the immolation of millions of human beings to sate the ambition of despots, we might have beheld humanity basking in the sunny rays of lasting and peaceful freedom.

But, brethren Alumni, the same principles which are necessary to the prosperity and well-being of a community, are equally applicable and essential to man's individual well-being. We are free to declare our faith, that there can be no permanent success in life otherwise than as it may rest upon firm and abiding moral principles. Only true integrity of purpose, which Christian faith alone can inspire, can guard the individual from the many temptations and seductive allurements which beset his course through life, and guide him forward to the accomplishment of permanent success. Vaulting genius may for a time succeed—like some meteor light gild the heavens for a moment with its lurid glare, unstayed by the strength of religious faith, must sink forever amid the strife of contending passions and false hopes.

To you, whom we this day receive from the bosom of our *Alma Mater*, we extend a brother's welcome to the drama of active life. To you, buoyant with the unchastened hope of youth, life presents a bright maze of unbroken sunshine. Ardent feelings picture only pleasant paths, through flowery meads, mid gurgling brooks of pure delight. We would not dispel the fond illusion. We would not disturb the day-dreams of happiness, by the intrusion of a single unwelcome truth. The bright phantoms will vanish soon enough. We would only desire, that when they have fled as morning mists before the rising sun, you should not repine, but with brave hearts meet life's realities, and poised by earnest faith in God, battle manfully in behalf of truth and humanity. But if you are unprepared for life's conflict, if your hearts are still unguarded by the shield of faith, Oh trust not yourselves to the contaminations and enticements of that world which often—too "often corrupts the noblest soul." Cross not the threshold, but linger still beneath the pro-

protecting shades of our *Alma Mater*, and earnestly seek that faith which alone can enshrine the heart with virtue's pure enamel. Only thus can you be prepared for a life of usefulness and honor—only thus can you benefit humanity, honor our beloved *Alma Mater*, and promote the highest interest of our Alumni Society.